



# ***NEWS RELEASE***

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## **SBA Official Addresses SCORE and Rockland Business Association**

**SUFFERN, NY** – Michael Pappas, regional administrator of the U.S. Small Business Administration, addressed the Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) and area lenders today at a breakfast sponsored by the Rockland Business Association.

Pappas was there to celebrate the expansion of SCORE into Rockland County and encourage area lenders and the business community to support the new SCORE chapter whose members will provide free, confidential, one-on-one business counseling to prospective and established small business owners in Rockland County.

Pappas attributed SBA's lending success in the region to SCORE's commitment to entrepreneurship and spirit of volunteerism, and the commitment and support of SBA's participating lenders. Region II lending hit an all-time record in fiscal year 2002 in both total loans and dollars. "An unprecedented 6,448 loans valued at \$1.3 billion were made to small businesses in the region encompassing New York, New Jersey Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands (Region 2)," Pappas said. "Additionally, new loan records were set in both numbers and dollars to Asian Americans and Native Americans and a new record was set in loan dollars to Hispanic Americans," he added.

In Rockland County, 26 loans for \$9.5 million were made in fiscal year 2002. Through the first six months of fiscal year 2003 (thru March 31<sup>st</sup>), 25 loans have been made in Rockland County. "At this pace, we are on target to double the number of loans made in Rockland County this year over fiscal year 2002," Pappas told the group.

Pappas commended SCORE, whose membership is comprised of retired business executives, for providing expert counseling and training to area business owners. In Region 2, SCORE members counseled and trained **45,399** small business owners and those contemplating entrepreneurship as a career option, last fiscal year.

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*For more information about SBA's programs for small businesses, call the SBA Answer Desk at 1-800 U ASK SBA or TDD 704-344-6640 or visit the SBA's extensive Web site at [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov).*

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